

God Remembered
Zechariah 12:1-9
Chapter 18
“The Great War”

As we come to the final three chapters of Zechariah’s prophecy (**Ch.12-14**), the topic is singular in nature and points to one period of time in particular, namely the events that will take place during the tribulation period. The history of the entire world will culminate in one final empire ruled by a demonic despot who will be bent upon the annihilation of God’s chosen people. We know him as the “*antichrist*” or the “*beast*”, as he is called in the book of *Revelation* (**Revelation 13:1**). This final emperor of evil will do Satan’s bidding as he deceives and will ultimately try to destroy God’s covenant people once and for all. But he will not be successful.

Since the calling of Abraham, the devil has used every deceitful trick he can think of in order to cause God to break His promise concerning the promised seed that God had guaranteed, through Whom all nations of the earth would be blessed (**Genesis 12:3**). He tried to lure Abraham into Egypt so that Sarah would be taken as the wife of another (**Genesis 12:10-20**). He tried through Lot, Abraham’s nephew, to bring about Abraham’s demise by the wicked kings of the plain (**Genesis 14**). And yet, each time, God intervened and remembered His covenant with Abraham, His friend.

But Satan did not stop there. He did his level best to destroy the faith of Joseph, and yet, God remembered and blessed him. He tried to have Moses, the great deliverer of God’s chosen people, killed while he was yet a child, and yet, God remembered His promise. Down through the ages, the old serpent has tried his best to devour God’s chosen people and keep the Messiah from coming to undo the curse his wicked schemes had brought into the world. And when he failed time and again to thwart God’s plan of redemption, he even enticed Herod to destroy the Promised One at His birth, but once more, God remembered His covenant.

Satan’s final onslaught against Israel will come in the form of a great battle, known in The Scriptures as “The Battle of Armageddon” (**Revelation 19:11-21**). This great conflict will begin with the antichrist’s incitement of all the kingdoms of earth coming against one tiny nation, namely Israel. And were it not for the intervention of Almighty God, the result would be catastrophic for God’s people. But a mighty warrior, namely Christ Jesus Himself, will lead His army and destroy the enemies of God. This is the battle that is being described in the first portion of **Zechariah 12**, and it shall bring about the blessed day when Israel will finally recognize Christ as the One True Messiah!

Let there be no misunderstanding of the Holy Scriptures. Satan’s beast will cause every nation on earth to bring war to Israel. This is not hyperbole, but rather, an undisputed Biblical truth. We are already, in our time, seeing many of the world powers beginning to align themselves with the enemies of Israel. Russia, China, Iran (along with pretty much every Muslim country), and now, we are even seeing a resurgence of anti-semitism in Europe reminiscent of the attitudes during Hitler’s rise of Nazism. Listen to what God’s word has to say in regards to Satan’s endless and every intensifying assault upon Israel, and how it shall ramp up in the last days:

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in labor and agony as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: There was a great fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads were seven crowns. Its tail swept away a third of the stars in heaven and hurled them to the earth. And the dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she did give birth it might devour her child. She gave birth to a Son, a male who is going to rule all nations with an iron rod. Her child was caught up to God and to his throne. The woman fled into the

wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, to be nourished there for 1,260 days.

Then war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels also fought, but he could not prevail, and there was no place for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was thrown out — the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the one who deceives the whole world. He was thrown to earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say,

The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have now come, because the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been thrown down.

They conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; for they did not love their lives to the point of death.

Therefore rejoice, you heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you with great fury, because he knows his time is short. **Revelation 12:1-12**

This passage describes for us the fiery hatred that Satan has both for God, and His chosen people. And when he is completely and finally expelled from heaven, he will then direct all of his rage in a single direction; the destruction of Israel. And that is why he will use his beast, the antichrist, to draw the nations of earth in to a battle over Jerusalem. This, to me, is proof that there will most definitely be a rapture of the church prior to these events. For the true church of Christ has been, and is to this day, a staunch defender of the descendants of Abraham. But when the church has been removed from the earth, Israel will find herself once more standing alone against an angry world. Alone that is, until Christ Himself intervenes and comes to her rescue!

The best way to break down the first section of **Zechariah 12**, therefore, is to take it verse by verse. So that is what we shall attempt to do for the purposes of this study.

Verse one:

A pronouncement:

The word of the Lord concerning Israel. A declaration of the Lord, Who stretched out the heavens, laid the foundation of the earth, and formed the spirit of man within him. **Zechariah 12:1**

First of all, there can be no discussion as to whom this prophecy is concerning, for God Himself makes it clear. It is a "*pronouncement concerning Israel.*" It has nothing to do with the church or any other nation. It stands alone as a prophecy in regards to the descendants of Abraham himself. Them and no other. It would be foolish for us to take a promise of God made to someone else and attempt to procure it for ourselves, as many these days are wont to do.

God begins His declaration by reminding His people that He is The Almighty God, Who spoke the universe into existence and formed the spirit of man within him. If He can do these things with effortless ease, then He can certainly fulfill all that He has promised. His Word can be trusted above all else. No matter how dark the skies become, He alone can calm the storm!

On an interesting side note, notice that God formed the very spirit inside of each of us. Our spirit is an entirely different entity than our earthly body. Our bodies are temporary, while the spirit that God formed within us is eternal. Every spirit that God has formed will end up in one of two places for eternity. Either heaven or hell. Spirits do not die. Therefore, it is essential that we make preparations for their eternal dwelling place while there is still time to do so. To trust in Christ and commit ourselves to Him and His eternal purpose is to secure a blessed eternity for the everlasting spirit which God formed within each of us.

Now on to **verse 2:**

“Look, I will make Jerusalem a cup that causes staggering for the peoples who surround the city. The siege against Jerusalem will also involve Judah, Zechariah 12:2

As previously mentioned, a terrible end-times attack is coming to Israel, and it shall be encompassed round about by her adversaries. These armies will be demonically inspired to do their worst. Drunken with their own blood lust, they will stagger into battle against an opponent they can never hope to defeat, for The Defender of Israel is none other than Almighty God!

Verse 3:

On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who try to lift it will injure themselves severely when all the nations of the earth gather against her. Zechariah 12:3

Now, we see a very poetic imagery of just how impossible it will become for the enemies of Israel to succeed in their sieges against her. It will be as if someone wished to carry off a heavy stone, but upon every attempt, they find that it is impossible to lift. So it is for all who would go against the will of God.

Verse 4:

“On that day”—this is the Lord’s declaration—“I will strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness. I will keep a watchful eye on the house of Judah but strike all the horses of the nations with blindness. Zechariah 12:4

The language given is poetically reminiscent of the days of horse and cavalry, but in reality it is God’s promise to render the weapons of war and their operators as blind and ineffective. Imagine a series of attacks against Israel where the missiles fall to the ground to no effect and all the power and might of every opposing army is rendered powerless. God will not allow His beloved people to be destroyed. How frustrating it will be for the mighty armies of the earth to be impotent in their well planned attacks. Imagine the dismay of all the commanding officers as they see the smoke clear and their targets still standing intact! God will be a fortress around Israel, and it will be miraculous to behold.

Verse 5-6:

Then each of the leaders of Judah will think to himself: The residents of Jerusalem are my strength through the Lord of Armies, their God. On that day I will make the leaders of Judah like a firepot in a woodpile, like a flaming torch among sheaves; they will consume all the peoples around them on the right and the left, while Jerusalem continues to be inhabited on its site, in Jerusalem. Zechariah 12:5-6

The United States military has in these days supplied Israel with a missile barrier system called, *The Iron Dome*. This defensive weapons system tracks all (or most) incoming missiles and shoots them down before they can make impact and detonate. The missiles thus harmless are exploded in the air before they reach their targets. This has served to frustrate the enemies of Israel in the past, and many blame the US for interfering in their will to retake therein. This is why the US is often the target of terrorist attacks, both here and abroad, because of our support for Israel.

However, when all the world comes against God’s chosen nation, He himself will become their “Iron Dome”, and all of the Israeli commanders will see that it is God Who is miraculously shielding His people. They will give glory to the God of Israel as the battle rages, and God Himself will give them power over their enemies. So much so that their effect will be like that of a fiery torch setting dry kindling ablaze. The enemies of Israel will become as chaff for the consuming fire of God’s wrath. Years of persecution will be forever settled in a day. And when the smoke clears, Jerusalem and its people shall remain!

Verse 7-9:

The Lord will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of David's house and the glory of Jerusalem's residents may not be greater than that of Judah. On that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that on that day the one who is weakest among them will be like David on that day, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the Lord, before them. On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. **Zechariah 3:7-9**

As the Israelites begin to realize that the battle belongs to The LORD, they are empowered and emboldened to fight. The LORD gives special reference to the salvation of David's line of Judah, for their king is coming to reign upon the throne of David. Christ Himself will defeat the armies of earth, and His people, the Jews, will be granted the strength of great warriors. Even the weak and infirm will be like King David in his prime, the mighty warrior for God! This is the great battle of Armageddon, when Christ shall return to overthrow the enemies of God with the breath of His mouth (**2 Thessalonians 2:8**).

The book of *Revelation* describes this return of The King with His heavenly armies thusly:

The Rider on a White Horse

Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and with justice he judges and makes war. His eyes were like a fiery flame, and many crowns were on His head. He had a name written that no one knows except Himself. He wore a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God. The armies that were in heaven followed Him on white horses, wearing pure white linen. A sharp sword came from his mouth, so that he might strike the nations with it. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will also trample the winepress of the fierce anger of God, the Almighty. And He has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The Beast and Its Armies Defeated

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he called out in a loud voice, saying to all the birds flying high overhead, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of military commanders, the flesh of the mighty, the flesh of horses and of their riders, and the flesh of everyone, both free and slave, small and great."

Then I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and against His army. But the beast was taken prisoner, and along with it the false prophet, who had performed the signs in its presence. He deceived those who accepted the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image with these signs. Both of them were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword that came from the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds ate their fill of their flesh.

Revelation 19:11-21

This is the settled reality of what will take place at the end of the Great Tribulation. Satan will be defeated, and his two lackeys; the Beast (antichrist) and his mouthpiece, the false prophet, will be thrown alive into the the fires of hell. There are two suppers mentioned in the book of *Revelation*. "The Marriage supper of The Lamb", where all the faithful will gather to celebrate our LORD'S triumphant return, or the "great supper of God", where the birds of the earth shall come to devour the flesh of those who have despised the Messiah King. Which leaves me with this thought: In the end, you will either be *for Christ...* or *for the birds!*

For our God... remembers!